1967

Design and technical direction of "One way pendulum"

Harry M. Trickey
The University of Montana

THE DESIGN AND TECHNICAL DIRECTION OF "ONE WAY PENDULUM."

By

Harry M. Trickey, Jr.

B. A. Adams State College, 1963

Presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1967

Approved by:

Richard H. James,
Chairman, Board of Examiners

Fred S. Honkala
Dean, Graduate School

May 31, 1967

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

As a partial requirement for the Master of Arts degree in Design and Technical Theater in the Drama Department of the University of Montana, a student must design and technical direct a major production which is presented to the public as a part of the department's full season. He then must submit a full report of this work in thesis form for evaluation by the Drama faculty. This is such a report on the design and technical direction of <u>One Way Pendulum</u>, a play written by N. F. Simpson, and directed by David Hunt, a graduate student in the Drama Department.

This thesis will cover the design of the sets and their construction and rigging, the design of the properties and their construction, and the design of the sound and lighting, and the disposition and management of the equipment and personnel necessary to the operation of the technical equipment.

It will consider the direction of the play only in so much as it may immediately affect the design and/or operation of any of the above-mentioned elements. It will not cover the make-up, costuming, or those properties specifically scheduled by the director as costume properties

(See following definitions).

This thesis is specifically intended for use by other students of the drama as reference material for design and technical direction problems in a theater situation such as the Masquer Theater (See discussion of this theater). It may also serve as a general reference source in these same areas for general design or technical direction procedures.

DEFINITIONS:

The Director is the individual who determines the over-all impression a play will make on the audience. It is his initial interpretation of the play around which all the various production elements must be coordinated through

> the expansion of the characterization, the determination of the emphasis and pace, and the various intensities...The major part of the director's work is with the cast, in guiding, regulating, coordinating and controlling the characterizations so that the desired dramatic illusion, in accordance with the conception of the play, may be realized.[1]

---

[1] Sobel, Theatre Hand Book. (2nd ed.; New York: Crown, 1940), p. 219.

The Scene Designer's job is to "express the essential qualities of the play through a total visual design."[2] His first duty is to paint a scaled rendering of the stage setting which will show as clearly as possible what the finished set will look like on stage. (See plates #1-4). For the technical director and the carpenters he must do working drawings and plans for the construction and assembly of all the set units and properties so that they may be built to his specifications and properly assembled on stage. (See drawings #6-19). For the director and the technical director he must draw scaled floor plans which show the locations of all the essential set pieces so that blocking can be completed and the set pieces properly located. (See drawings #3-5). His other duties include designing a light plot so that the instruments can be properly located and angled by the technical director and the lighting technicians. (See drawings #20-21).

The Technical Director is a relatively new position in the theater today and is basically a supervisory position in the educational theater. In duties and responsibilities,

---

[2]Robert Edmund Jones. The Dramatic Imagination (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941), p. 78

his nearest counterpart in the professional theater is the stage manager, but he may also assume many of the responsibilities handled by the professional scene designer. As an educator, his job is to recruit and train the personnel necessary for handling the various technical positions. He also directs the construction and rigging of the sets and properties, and is responsible for the disposition and management of the sound and light equipment. His most important duty during a production is the direction of the technical rehearsals during which time he coordinates all the technical elements into the over-all production.

Properties for a play usually come in three distinct categories, but there may be more as there were in this production. The most immediate are the Floor or Set Props, which are "all the furniture normally used by the actors."[3] These always are related directly to the action of the play and are therefore of extreme importance to the visual design of the production. Decorative props or Trim Props usually serve no practical purpose other than to help the designer establish period, nationality, and locale of the setting."[4]

---

[3]A. S. Gillette. Stage Scenery: Its Construction and Rigging, (New York: Harper and Rowe, Publishers, 1959) p. 4.

[4]Ibid.

They serve as embellishment and reinforcement to the over-all visual design. Costume props "are those articles which are accessories to a costume and under ordinary circumstances the responsibility of creating, adapting, or purchasing them is given to the costume designer."[5] Specifically, items such as a lorgnette case, purses, umbrellas, or an unworn overcoat are considered costume properties.

THE MASQUER THEATER:

Because of the unique physical characteristics of the Masquer Theater (See drawings #1-2), the following discussion is offered to provide background for the production approach which follows in Chapter III and IV. It is hoped that by the following analysis the readers will have a clearer understanding of subsequent material and that this may also serve as reference for subsequent productions in this theater.

The Masquer Theater occupies a room on the ground floor of the Fine Arts Building. The playing area occupies one quarter of the room's total floor space, and is surroun-

---

[5]Elizabeth Montgomery, Sophie Devine and Margaret Harris, Designing and Making Stage Costumes By Motley, (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1965) p. 45.

ded on two sides by an audience, and on the other two sides by the walls of the room. There are two entrances to the stage, one through a doorway in the far upstage corner, and the other in the opposite corner. This "post entrance" requires that anyone wishing to get to the stage must pass between the audience to get there. The ceiling of the theater is approximately ten feet high and is traversed by two beams which meet at right angles in the center of the room. The four areas thus defined in the ceiling serve to define the areas of the theater. In one corner is the stage, and in the opposing corner of the room is the inner lobby. The audiences sit at right angles to one another occupying the other two quarter sections. The beams are supported at about the center point in the room by a square column which has come to be known as "the post." This post then separates the two audience areas, and the stage from the inner lobby.

As can be seen, no architectual elements exist to separate the audience from the stage other than the beams which only stand out from the ceiling about one foot. In the proscenium theater the architecture of the building clearly presents a picture frame view of the stage: the

stage and the set exist as something which is "looked into through an opening."[6] Consequently, there is a very strong sense of separation in the proscenium house while the Masquer Theater generates this same sense only slightly through the beams in the ceiling and the post. Other elements which serve to give a sense of separation to the two areas are those which were built into the room to make it into a theater. The carpeting on the floor of the audience and lobby areas, the color of the walls, and the presence of the seats and risers accomplish the only positive definition of area there is. Consequently, the audience is not only immediately physically present, the audience and the actors are literally bound together by the same architectual structure. Any sense of separation that is desired must be accomplished by the lines of the set, the nature of the blocking, and the level of intensities.

The upstage doorway is a normal sized door, and its location and the architecture of the building around it makes it impossible and of no advantage to expand. As a result, the lobby area is used as a passageway to and from

---

[6]Vern Adix, Theatre Stagecraft. (New York: The Children's Theatre Press, 1956), p. 4.

the stage because of the larger opening offered through the post entrance. This, then, makes use of the lobby as a storage and passage way mandatory for any props, set pieces, or acting business of large dimensions.

The desirable qualities of this theater are direct results of the close relationship possible between the actor and his audience.

1. The nearness of the audience allows many subtilities of stage business, vocal inflection, and gesture which can greatly enhance character and acting business. It also allows the designers to practice many fine points of their crafts, and sometimes imposes great demands on their abilities. In this theater, the placement of every nail, the stroke of every brush, and the selection of every property must be carefully handled. Not only might an audience member see the general characteristics of the cup an actor is handling, she may also examine its trim and if she is sitting in the right seat, identify its manufacturer.

2. There are also many opportunities for direct interaction between the audience and the actor, and plays that encourage this have a distinct advantage when being produced in this theater.

3. As has already been suggested, the Masquer Theater places the emphasis upon the specific, which is in opposition to the proscenium theater which emphasizes the general. Acting business must be broader in the proscenium house in order to seem natural, in the Masquer acting business can be natural.

The disadvantages of this theater are the results of the way the room was built in the first place. It was not originally intended to be a theater.

1. Off-stage space equivalent to wings[7] in a proscenium house are non-existent, and so any on-stage space made available for wagoned units, or for set storage, must be gained at the expense of acting space.

2. The single access to the stage from the back stage area is through the up-stage door. Otherwise, the post entrance must be used which requires that the actor go through an outer lobby, an inner lobby, and between two audiences before reaching the stage.

3. In terms of design, the designer and the director must both forego the temptation to play to one audience

---

[7] Wings: When one moves out of the acting area to the sides of the stage he is moving offstage, or into the wings. (Adix: p. 6).

only, as if playing through a proscenium opening. Nor should they play to the post, i.e. to neither audience and diagonally across the stage. The third alternative might be to play this theater as if it were a full arena[8] stage, which it is not. Ideally, it should be played for what it is, a double proscenium theater, by giving equal strength and balance to both audiences.

4. While subtlety is the strength of this theater, this should not be taken advantage of by either the director or the designer. An extreme amount of detail could leave the play busy and consequently confusing.

---

[8]Arena: a theater in which the audience sits on four sides of the stage, and only separated by their lack of illumination. (Adix; p. 7)

Chapter II

One Way Pendulum is a modern British Comedy of Manners in a farce structure about the detrimental effects of personal excess on the individual and on a cohesive social environment. As a comedy of manners, Mr. Simpson centers the action of the play upon the Groomkirby household, "a nice suburban middleclass English family with the usual suburban hobbies, bickering, and boredom."[1], boredom that results from each member of the family pursuing his own and minute petty interest to the extent that each one becomes lost and isolated in a world of his own individual creation. Their isolation from one another is so complete, and their individual interests so specialized that intercommunication on any meaningful level is hardly existent. Communication among them is absurd nonsense, while their mode of life and behavior is hardly more than a series of exchanged impositions. Sylvia, the egotistical daughter, is the personification of discontented adolescence, raised with little or no responsibilities, spoiled, indulged from the crib, and insolent, she spends her time in a con-

---

[1]Mollie Panter-Downes. "Letter From London" New Yorker, XXXVI (May 28, 1960), p. 104.

stant state of complaint. Her brother, Kirby, has reduced life to a stimulus response basis, his highest ambition being to be one of Pavlov's dogs. Around him exists a complex maze of machinery through which he communes with the outside world. A ring on a cash register calls him to dinner, while for amusement he is upstairs training 499 Speak-Your-Weight Machines to sing the "Hallelujah Chorus."

As a farce the play is based on believable people pursuing and doing impossible and ridiculous things. Several norms of behavior patterns are first established by the characters and then each is expanded to such illogical and absurd degrees as to turn reality on its head.[2] For instance, it is very acceptable for Mr. Groomkirby to have a hobby, and as a law buff he would be expected to have a fair knowledge of courts and have a sizeable collection of books on the subject. However, as it turns out, his interests from one time to another are quite unstable and only fleeting, at best. The dialogue tells us that at one time in the past an overzealous interest in archaeology lead to his bringing Stonehenge home, while other times and interests have resulted in other clutter for Mrs. Groomkirby to clean up. Con-

---

[2]J.C.Trewin. "The World of the Theatre," Illustrated London News CCXXXVI (Jan. 16, 1960) p. 110.

sequently, during the course of the play, it is not surprising to have him bring in a full-sized kit of an "Old Bailey Courtroom" and proceed to assemble it in the living room, and make such alterations to the house as are necessary for its accomodation.

The play's structure is extremely episodic, and yet the progress of events is not in any sense founded on a cause and effect basis. Each episode is more of a "bit" that is written as a complete event in itself, with the characters involved picking up a subject and then playing it until a new subject is introduced which is then played in its turn until it is exhausted. Consequently there is a compounding of the lack of family interaction by the manner in which the play is blocked out. The subject matter of each episode is usually nonsensical, and little or no relationship existing from one episode to the next. Consequently the play depends heavily upon characterizations and location to provide a sense of unity to the plot.

The first act centers upon Mr. Groomkirby who, as the backbone of the family, provides whatever semblance of order the household may possess. Her activities involve picking up and cleaning the junk accululated by the remainder

of the family, and the maintenance of a neat larder. For the former she wields a duster and a continual dialogue with herself about the remainder of her family, and for the latter she hires a professional garbage disposal. This turns out to be an elephantine woman by the name of Myra Penelope Straightpiece Gantry who arrives daily to eat up the leftovers. The conversations between these two establishes a good deal of the exposition while at the same time preparing the audience for a highly rhetorical play.

> Myra: You heard about Mr. Gridlake?
> Mabel: No?
> Myra: I thought you might have heard. Had an accident on his skis.
> Mabel: Serious?
> Myra: Killed himself.
> Mabel: No!
> Myra: It was his own fault. He went down the incline round the bend and straight into the jaws of death.
> Mabel: What on earth for?
> Myra: Showing off, I suppose. [3]

In the course of the first act a wheel chair, occupied by Mrs. Groomkirby's invalid sister, Aunt Mildred, is brought onstage. From here she gives several long monologues on her favorite subject: transportation. She discusses her current interest, space travel, and then reminisces about

---

[3] Act I, p. 17.

when she and another sister used to "ride to hounds on their camels." Intermittently, the prodigious labor of training 499 Speak-Your-Weight Machines to sing is heard from upstairs and commented on. Kirby is having remarkable success in the venture except for one particular individual named, "Gormless," who insists on repeating "15 stone, 10 pounds" instead of singing the bass part to the "Hallelujah Chorus." This continues for about half of the act until Kirby knocks himself unconscious moving his weights about. The daughter is in and out of the scenes in a continual state of complaint about everything from the length of her arms, to activities of the rest of the family. And then toward the end of the act, Mr. Groomkirby begins to bring in parts and pieces of the "Old Bailey Courtroom" which he begins to assemble in the front room.

During the act break the "Old Bailey" is completed, and as soon as Sylvia leaves on a date, the stage is set for the first of the trial scenes in Act II. The courtroom officials enter and decide to proceed with the trial even though the Jury Box and the Dock have "been held up by traffic lights and other untoward occurances." Mr. Groomkirby is the first witness and flatly states an inten-

tion to perjure himself. He swears on Harriet Beecher Stowe's, Uncle Tom's Cabin, because there are "certain passages in The Bible that he takes exception to." Although cock-sure of himself at first, he is quickly "tied into a variety of reef knots by a deadly prosecuting counsel,"[4] and is subsequently found guilty of "actively disliking transportation and only negotiating with it during a time when he was a practicing masochist." However, before a sentence can be pronounced, he turns off the current to the kit, and dissolves the courtroom officials. A sadistic game of three-handed whist is played by him and the judge who plays all three hands while ordering Mr. Groomkirby about in a situation that is hardly more than a nightmare. Eventually, the courtroom officials begin to reappear and the trial of Kirby begins. He is accused of killing forty-three people. The testimony of the witnesses reveals that he killed these people in order to have a logical pretext for wearing black clothes, and that his present efforts to train the Machines is a means he has devised to avoid being the direct cause of death. He plans to first train them to sing, and then ship them to the north pole where they would act as sirens

---

[4] Ibid.

to lure people up there. He reasons that the excitement that this would generate would cause these people to jump up and down. This in turn would tilt the earth's axis enough to start another ice age which would in turn supply him with the necessary deaths and consequent pretext for wearing black clothes. However, he is acquitted through the efforts of a bumbling, senile defense counsel who convinces the court that "sentencing a man for one crime may well be putting him beyond the reach of the law in respect of those crimes which he has not yet had an opportunity to commit."

The act and the play ends then with the household back to normal, the Old Bailey still intact, and Sylvia complaining about the presence of the audience.

The outstanding element of the play is the playwright's use of language. The syntax is structured to emphasize British inflection and accent. Plot development, situation, and concise word definition is sacrificed to promote the oral qualities of various word and thought combinations to the point that the play is hardly more than a continuum from one pun to the next.

> It represents that good minor English tradition of the Donnish-Eccentric or Bachelor Art which is

> simply a specialized form: it is concerned not with human insight but with words and dialectic...Considered as powerful forces with separate lives of their own, as counters in an elaborately fantastic, but manically logical game.[5]

In subject matter Mr. Simpson has brought together two very popular traditions of the English Theater: the Drawing Room Comedy, and the Courtroom Melodrama. The first he burlesques through absurd characterizations, ridiculous and nonsensical activity and subject content. Instead of clear characterizations and an organized organic plot, he presents his audience with credible caricatures who mouth mindless and disjointed gossip. Then with an eye on the "pedantic barbarity and the pettyfogging ruthlessness of the law...he makes a farce of courtroom procedures."[6]

As a young man Mr. Simpson was a student of Ionesc and the continental avant gardest which he has since learned to exploit.

> British writers can take just so much influence from abroad then the mechanism comes into play and they revert to accepted patterns. Mr. Simpson is now assuredly closer to Carrol and to the legions of

---

[5]A. Alvarez,"Bachelor Art," New Statesman LIX (January 2, 1960), p. 12

[6]Alan Brien. "Theatre Review," Spectator. CCIV (January 1, 1960), p. 13

crossword addicts than to any avant garde playwrights.[7]

Thematically this is a play about unhealthy individuality and the chaos that will result from excessive self interest and excessive self indulgence. Individuality in this case is not the result of character strength, but rather of character weakness and self deception. They can believe that what they are interested in is important, in fact, the most necessary and important thing in the world to the point that they will impose themselves and their wishes on one another without the least awareness of the inconvenience they may be causing one another. Communication and understanding in this state of existence does not exist with the results that they can "all live reasonably well in what amounts to a madhouse."[8]

In summary, this play can best be stated as a nonsensical study of nonsense; or as Mr. Simpson, himself, puts it, "It is an evening of High Drung and Slarrit."[9]

---

[7]A. Alvarez, "Bachelor Art," New Statesman LIX (January 2, 1960), p. 12

[8]Henry Hewes, "Speak Your Wait," Saturday Review XLIV (October 7, 1961), p. 38

[9]J. C. Trewin, "The World of the Theatre," Illustrated London News CCXXXVI (January 16, 1960), p. 110

Chapter III

During the initial meetings between the director and the designer an attempt was made to formulate a concept for the play from which the total production could develop. Such matters as style and interpretation were discussed in terms of period, playwright's intentions, thematic content, plot development, characterizations, setting, and subject matter. Consideration was also given at this time to problems in the script that might later be faced in presenting the play on the Masquer Theater stage. The purposes then of these initial meetings were to (1) determine the qualities of the play the director wished to emphasize, (2) the manner in which these could best be visually expressed while (3) keeping in mind the physical requirements of the script, and (4) meeting the physical realities of the Masquer Theater. During this time the following conclusions were agreed upon:

1. That the play was written as a farce about believable people who do unbelievable and absurd things.

2. That these people consider themselves to be very practical and very reasonable. They try hard to have what they consider a very reasonable and comfortable life.

3. That they treat given objects and ideas as if they

were something else.

4. That much of the humor in the play is in the absurd and ridiculous things these people do.

5. That only the broader and more obvious moments of ridicule of the English Middle-Class would be recognized by an American audience, and should therefore, not be given primary consideration.

6. That the play resembles Lewis Carrol's "Alice In Wonderland" to some degree in subject matter, situation and language.

7. That the playwright also borrows dramatic devices from Harold Pinter and from the "Theater of Cruelty." This is particularly true of the second act trial scenes and the whist scene.

A problem of plot development also was noted in that the first act differs drastically from the second. The play is only loosely unified through location and characterization, while in all other matters there is very little unity. The following differences between the first and second act were noted:

1. The setting for the first act is a domestic interior which is altered sufficiently between acts to become a courtroom environment, even though the location remains the same.

2. The dialogue of the first act is controlled by women, while the dialogue of the second is controlled by men.

3. The subject matter of the first act is light domestic topics, gossip, and bright household chatter, however absurd the treatment may be. In the second act, the subject matter concerns a series of two trials. It is therefore extremely

limited, using a highly specialized language: it marches deliberately from one point to the next, its intention being to implicate and discover cause and effect.

4. The action in the first act centers on domestic chores, and family activities, while the second involves courtroom procedures.

5. Major characters from the first act make only token appearances in the second, while the second act introduces a completely new set of characters, and gives major emphasis to minor characters from the first act.

6. The mood of the first act is bright and gay, with everyone busily going about his business. In the second, the attitudes of the Judge and Counsel for the Prosecution are sadistic, the situation and business cold and inhuman. It is for Mr. Groomkirby, a nightmare.

However, there is one element from which the play never deviates and that is the viewpoint. The action is contained in the dialogue which reveals mental activity and attitudes. For these people, "total unreality is their reality, life a logical progression of illogic."[1] "In this play, one is reminded of Kafka, reading his own work out-loud, and laughing."[2] Consequently, it was decided that the set must reflect the disjointed madness and topsy-turvy

---

[1]Whitney Balliett. New Yorker XXXVII (September 30, 1961), pp. 118-20.

[2]Richard Gilman, Commonwealth LXXV (October 20, 1961), p. 94

world these people had created for themselves. The set, in short, had to provide an environment which would reflect the state of these people's minds, minds that unintentionally confused values, shifted subject matter into absurd and conflicting contexts, and with regularity, subordinated the serious matters of life to triviality. They would distort reality without ever realizing it. Against this is reflected their sense of British restraint and stodginess; their values are typically middle-class, conservative and judging always by appearances. Only they do not know what to give value to.

The director and the designer decided that the most expressive feeling the play could engender would be that of restrained madness.

The next area to be given mutual consideration was the physical requirements of the play. For the first act it was felt that the following elements are required by the script:

1. A house interior, British, and non-descriptive in period.
2. Livingroom and dining room areas, decorated and furnished as such.
3. An entrance to the outside which would be the front door.

4. An entrance to a kitchen which would be either wholly or only partially visible.

5. That period should be indicated as present time through costume, properties, and set, but that no particular decor should dominate, it being assumed that the house would have been furnished from a variety of sources.

6. That all objects and all parts of the set should easily be recognized for what they really were, regardless of design treatment or what an actor might do with them.

For the second act the following was required by the script:

1. A courtroom, the units of which would appear realistic, having been built from a kit, and become a reality that imposes itself upon their lives. The point of its being real was to show that they adjusted to it, but did not accept it as a part of their existence. And even though Mr. Groomkirby is thoroughly brain-washed by it, he still rises above it in the end, and can turn it off and on at will. Furthermore, the point seemed to be made rather clearly in the script that the indictment is against the courts, not Mr. Groomkirby, even though it was he who was tried. His inability to account for himself was excusable, considering he was motivated by what he instinctively felt to be right, whereas, the court officials are unforgivable, they being fully aware of their abuse of justice. Mr. Groomkirby's life in "his own world" can easily be understood and accepted, albeit slightly insane, if what goes on in the courtroom is any indication of what reality is like.

2. They should all be practical[3] for the acting

---

[3]practical: Anything that works on a stage.

business required of them.

3. There should be some alterations made to the first act set to accommodate the new set.

4. The lines of the courtroom should be in opposition to the lines of the first act. The courtroom should reflect the institutional and the methodological.

5. It should be an intrusive element into the house and the lives of the Groomkirby's, requiring that they move around it or through it in conducting their business.

6. The courtroom should reflect a difference in mood between the two acts. The madness of the first act would be light and bright; the madness of the second, frightful.

With this decided, the director and the designer turned their attention to how they were going to go about getting this play on the Masquer Theater stage. As the play had originally been written for a proscenium theater, several staging problems were immediately evident, not the least of which was the fact that all through the first act the scene would shift abruptly from the livingroom-diningroom to another part of the house, and then back again. Two of these locations involved Kirby in his upstairs room, one of which opened the play. The other two took place on the front porch where Mr. Groomkirby is seen assembling his courtroom. In the professional production, these short

scenes took place before an oleo[4] curtain which masked the upstage portions of the set. In the first Kirby scene the oleo is also used for a projection screen. With existing facilities in the Masquer Theater, a curtain rigged to meet the requirements of the script was all but impossible. It would have taken more time to take the curtain down once than the total time four scenes all together played. Otherwise, light sufficient to illuminate the scene would have washed out whatever would have been projected on it, and the effect lost anyway. An examination of this first scene revealed that it had to accomplish the following things:

1. Establish Kirby and his relationship with the machines.

2. Establish what the machines do, and particularly "Gormless."

3. Establish Sgt. Barnes, his relationship to the household, and to the audience, and get his first expository lines delivered and understood.

4. Get the gag across of the 499 "Speak-Your-Weight Machines" singing the "Hallelujah Chorus."

5. Set the style of the production, and prepare the audience for the absurdity that is to follow.

---

[4]oleo: A front cloth that allows a scene to be played in front of it while another scene is being set further back.

6. Shift fast and smoothly.

Scenery necessary for this scene amounted to the three machines and the projection so there would be a sight gag for the crescendo of the "Hallelujah Chorus." Not being able to rig the curtain and the projection, it was decided to play the scene in a neutral area, isolated with light from the remainder of the first act set, and hope that the pantomine and dialogue could carry the scene, which it finally did not do.

The second Kirby scene shows him moving weights around upstairs. Again the oleo curtain was essential to the plot of the play. The scene was finally played with Kirby rolling a weight down the steps and out the front door, and since Mrs. Groomkirby talks to him while he does this it was felt that the scene would work. For these scenes to have worked ideally it is felt now by the designer that the following should have been done:

1. An area built into the set, elevated, and blocked off by a scrim[5], which would be Kirby's room, or a part of it.

2. More time spent introducing the machines to the

---

[5]scrim: A gauze cloth that looks transparent when lit from behind.

audience.

a. showing them that they are weighing machines that "speak your weight."

b. more time spent letting Kirby work with them to establish what, exactly, it is he is having them do.

This would be done to establish a definite location for the upstairs rooms and a definite relationship with the remainder of the house. This, then, would allow a definite place for the Kirby scenes to be played which would be more consistent with the needs of the play.

The two Groomkirby scenes take place on the front porch and were intended to establish him, his project with the "Old Bailey" kit, and to mask a food shift. Except for the last requirement, his scenes could have been played in the front room. However, it was absolutely essential that the audience not see that the food that has been put out for Myra to eat is being struck.[6] The solution was to play the scene with Mr. Groomkirby in the area near the post with a good deal of strength, and to let the activity at the table that had already been established, carry the food away. When the scene shifts back to the table, Myra is

---

[6]struck: (strike) To dismantle a setting, or to clean it off stage.

holding a huge bowl and ladling food out of it at a good pace. The remainder of the food is struck during the confusion caused when Mr. Groomkirby brings a sizeable part of the "Old Bailey" into the house. A good deal of credit is to be given to the actress in this case, who managed to convince the audience that she ate a good deal of food every evening while actually never eating more than two teaspoons full of Jello.

In anticipation of the scene shift required between acts, it was decided that the "Old Bailey" units should be built as flexible as possible, with quick and easy assembly being their most important features.

The design phase was now ready to begin, and the initial efforts centered on discovering a line from which the shapes in the set could be developed and which would express the quality of madness desired by the director. Various design books, journals, and publications on period furniture, interior design, and decoration were used as reference on British decor (see Bibliography). The periods that were given the most attention were the Georgian Period of the late 18th Century, and the Regency Period of the early 19th Century. The first was examined because it was typically

British and has tended to persist. The square, restrained, and regimental lines seem to recur constantly in British architecture. And the latter because of the broad outline with the elaborate detail in it, which suggested the possibility of many variations.

The first elements to receive attention were the doorways and windows, but they did not work because they have a way of being too structurally dependent on their function. Furniture also suffers on this same count, its function not allowing adequate freedom of design. From the initial effort to develop a design motif, the reversed curve of the cabriole leg[7] was the single result. But as it turned out, this was the line that was to become the major motif of the whole set once it was expanded upon and developed into a Chippendale period fireplace. The several early efforts to do a painted rendering of the set met with little success because the designer was not yet completely adjusted to the Masquer Theater stage, and the "feeling" for the play was not yet discovered.

A side board for the show was discovered in the Department of Drama's storage room, which was built and ornamented

---

[7]cabriole leg: A curved leg ending in an ornamental foot, frequent in Queen Ann and Chippendale furniture.

on a variation of the lines that had been developed into the furniture and fireplace. From these pieces the design motif was pretty well set (see drawings #13, 14).

The key to the feeling of the play resulted from a consideration of what the audience's relationship to the play should be. In looking over the script several instances of dialogue were noted that required direct address to the audience by an actor, and by the stage business. Also the character, Sgt. Barnes, passes much as though he were a tourist guide. One exchange between him and Mrs. Groomkirby goes as follows:

> Barnes: Is it all right if we come in, by the way?
>
> Mrs. G: (looking sharply at Barnes and then suspiciously at the audience) If who come in?
>
> Barnes: Unless you'd rather we went off and came back later?
>
> Mrs. G: (She gives Barnes a meaningful glance, closes the cupboard, moves to the sideboard and dusts on top of it). Like living on the pavement.
>
> Barnes: I'll bring them in, then, shall I, Mrs. Groomkirby?
>
> Mrs. G: Yes, I suppose they'd better come in if they're coming.[8]

This exchange and one other like it at the end of the

---

[8]Act I, p. 4.

play seemed to indicate one of two things. First, that the play is in fact intended by the playwright to be played on a stage and that this stage and set is literally the characters' home. What occurs every night is the family's frantic attempt to meet the demands of trying to live on a theater stage while constantly having to endure the presence of an audience. The place where they now live might well have been the only thing available after their first home burned down. The "house" they live in then would be incidental to their lives, it having been decorated and furnished out of the prop room and scenery storage dock. The alternative presents the possibility of playing to the audience as though they were the neighbors-down-the-street and curious passers-by who stopped by from time to time to watch the strange things the Groomkirby's do to keep themselves occupied and socially up to date. They would be looking through windows, doors, and standing around in the flower beds, and stomping down the grass. They would literally "come into" the scene. The director chose the latter. Thus, a framework around the set had to be designed which extended the limits of the set beyond the edge of the stage, giving the audience the feeling of being enclosed by the

set. The windows now became of extreme importance, and their relationship to the audience critical. They were the means through which the audience viewed the play. A series of overhead arches were designed that would extend the lines of the doorways and windows (See drawing #9). The front door, which had been previously floor-based, was lifted, and flown from the ceiling. The living room and dining room were separated by an overhead arch, while arches which separated the audiences from the stage reached out to enclose them. The roofs over the windows were the principle means of establishing the existence of the windows and front doorway. A square eave from the Georgian Period was used because it did not tend to arrest the eye, or draw attention as an upright rectangle eave would have done, the eye moving easily along the short, blunt line they created.[9]

The next step for the director and the designer was to solidify playing areas. A sizeable area at the post was to be the front porch, a neutral area which would also allow the first Kirby scene. Stage right[10] would be the living

---

[9]Francis Obset, Art and Design in Home Living, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), p. 86.

[10]stage right: Stage directions are determined by the actor's viewpoint as he faces the audience.

room, stage left the dining room, with entrance to the kitchen and upstairs passage, upstage left and right. Now the design could be completed, while keeping in mind the following criteria:

1. A feeling of restrained madness, of shifted values and odd relationships.

2. Although real people, they do strange things.

3. An audience as a real and present thing, enclosed into the set.

4. The first act is busy, lively, chatty: a delightful madness.

The design for Act II had to feature a replica of an "Old Bailey" courtroom that was moved into the house as a kit by Mr. Groomkirby and erected in the living room and dining room. It then becomes the platform from which he is put on trial. It was decided that its presence in the house should physically reflect an intrusiveness, with furniture displaced, doorways blocked, a whole wall torn down to accommodate it, and traffic routes disrupted. The limited stage height and floor space prevented the duplication of an authentic replica of the famous institution. It was realized that sight lines and the scene shift would both be factors in the design which would seriously limit the complexity and the number of pieces which could be used. The few units

actually used would have to accomplish a feeling of domination and intrusiveness without being particularly large or cumbersome. The witness and prosecution boxes were designed to emphasize height through the trim and through their rectangular shape. The Judge's Bench also used the same trim technique, but was designed with a very large base in order to suggest breadth and weight. Mass was emphasized through color, by painting the units a greyed brown. The overall lines of the units were square and hard so as to emphasize the autocratic and institutional nature of this particular courtroom. The principle visual device for creating the mood of a nightmare was to be in the lighting design which would function with the set, to emphasize hard, sharp corners, the deeper tones of the set.

Now, returning to the lines of the fireplace, which had been developed to be light, whimsical, and fun, the effort was made to add a touch of madness to them. A slight suggestion of animation proved to be the key. The lines in the unit were treated to suggest that the weight of the unit itself was pulling it down and causing it to shift and twist on its foundations. This idea was further developed into the doorways, and walls of the whole set. All the

lines in the doorway leading upstairs were first rounded off slightly, and then drawn to suggest that the doorway was swaying in and collapsing. The arched doorway leading to the kitchen was bulged out slightly. Wall sections were shown as having slipped away from the wall they were connected to, or as leaning in on one another. The whole effect was that of a bright, cheerful household that was collapsing in on itself and was holding itself together by the most prodegious effort it could muster. In keeping with the brightness and the vibrant quality in the play, the lines were all kept clean, and the painting treatment was clean and bright. To reflect the business of the household, wall paper patterns were developed on floral motifs that were very fussy and very busy. The overall effect that was desired for the first act was a very busy, vibrant and delightfully mad interior.

Chapter IV

With the completion of the design and working drawings (see appendix) the set was ready for construction. It was decided to begin with those units that would most immediately affect the blocking. This was considered necessary by the director and the technical director because of the irregularity built into all the units to which the actors would have to become familiar. The first unit built and assembled on stage was the upstage platform and stairway unit that was meant to be the passageway to the second floor of the building. (See drawing #11) Its assembly amounted to locating a 3 x 6 foot platform, a 6-foot triangular platform and a step unit, putting them on stage and then legging them to the proper height. The remainder of the floor plan was taped on the stage floor to show the location of wall lines and doorways. Also, as the rehearsals were just beginning, substitute properties were made available by the technical director and the assistant to the director for use by the actors. The interior doorway units were built next and put on stage as soon as the units they connected to were either completed or pulled out of stock. All the dining room units were fastened together with double-headed

nails to facilitate the eventual strike. The doorway itself had been built using standard flat construction techniques except around the door opening itself which was built out of 1"x6" and 5/8" plywood to allow the internal shaping of this unit. (See drawing #8)

The window unit which constituted the other end of the dining room interior had to be built as a double-faced unit, since it could be seen on both sides. This was done by simply building one of the sides and then building a mirror image of it. Spacers of 1"x4" were used to give the unit the proper thickness and to hold it together. (See drawing #9) Realistic window detail was simulated as closely as possible with 3/4" cove moulding, and the window panes simulated with black bobinett. The windows were given this realistic treatment to enhance the illusion that the audience was looking through them. The living room interior and the doorway leading to the upstairs presented a special problem in construction and assembly because a part of this interior would have to be "torn down" between acts to accommodate the "Old Bailey." The down right window unit, and the fireplace backing were built and assembled for permanent installation, but the doorway had to be built and stabilized

to endure a fast scene shift. (See drawing #6) It was attached to the fireplace backing flat by loose-pin hinges, and to the platform behind it with loose-pin hinges. (See drawing #7) A cut away duplicate of this unit was built which revealed the determination Mr. Groomkirby had for getting the "Old Bailey" into that house. (See drawing #16) It was connected to the fireplace backing flat with a lash line after loose-pin hinges proved to be too awkward for a fast scene shift.

Since all of the units had been designed so that they were somewhat irregular, they could not be self-supporting. The whole interior was therefore fastened to overhead light battens for stabilization. The irregularity built into all the units was standardized at 5° where fit with another unit was crucial.

The next units to be assembled on stage were the overhead arches. To insure a proper fit and to keep the weight down, only the outside frame was built solid. The other side of the units were to be surfaced with 1/8" Upson board[1] which would be nailed into 1"x4" spacers. (See drawing #10)

---

[1]Upson board: A light-weight paper board.

The plan was to first build the frames using standard construction procedures, nail the spacers into place, and then to hinge the units together. The whole thing would then be raised into place using black stovepipe wire to secure it to the light battens. Once in place and stabilized, the Upson board would be applied and cut to give a tight, even fit. The decision to use Upson board for the inside surfaces was based on weight, but the final decision was made when it was realized that lighting instruments would be located and angled so as to shine through the unit, revealing the internal structure of what was supposedly a solid wall.

The units all built and in place, they were now prepared for painting. The first step was to add profile pieces[2] to all the doorways, and then to dutchman[3] all the cracks to insure a smooth, unblemished surface.

The courtroom units had to be built so that they could be assembled very quickly and easily during the scene shift. The basic units consisted of two platforms and a step unit

---

[2]Profile pieces: strips of wood attached to the edges of scenery to suggest greater width.

[3]Dutchman: A strip of cloth glued over a seam between two flats to cover it.

for the Judge's Bench, and a platform apiece for the witness and prosecution boxes. All of the outside surfaces were built as booked flats[4] that folded to fit tightly around the platforms. This provided for base stabilization. The desk tops were designed and fitted to hold the units together at the top. All of the flats were covered with Upson board both for strength, and so that the moulding used to trim the units could be adhered to a rigid surface. The units were held together with loose-pin hinges, screen-door hooks and picture hooks. (See drawings #17-20)

The painting process began as soon as the dutchmaning was completed. The casein type water base scene paint was used. The base coat was mixed thick enough so that only one coat gave the surfaces the smooth, even coat desired. The color mixtures were generally as follows for the surfaces listed: (See Appendix: plates 1-4)

Living room interior:	bright greenish blue
Dining room interior:	warm yellow
Courtroom:	Van Dyke Brown-Dark brown
Exterior (brick):	tones and shades of red
Props:	deep salmon
Trim:	brownish red

---

[4] booked flats: A pair of hinged flats that look somewhat like a book standing on its base.

After all the base coats had been applied, the walls (interiors) were treated with the other colors used in the set to pull the colors together. Two methods of treatment were used; spattering and sponging. In the first a flipping action is used to throw a fine spray of paint out of the brush; the dining room was treated this way with the base color from the living room and visa versa. Then, using an organic sponge, other shades of these same colors were sponged onto the surfaces. This technique works best when the paint is a little thick, and the sponge has been squeezed almost dry. The surfaces were sponged heaviest at the top and bottoms of the flats, and lightest around head height so as to insure good focus, and to suggest the effects of age on the wall paper. Then the stencil patterns were applied. (See Appendix: plates 2 and 4) This was again done with a sponge. Left this way, the stencil pattern is usually too defined, so the wall surfaces must again be treated to soften the edges and blend the patterns into the texture of the wall. The walls were again sponged, duplicating what had been done before.

The treatment of the exterior involved the technique called "scrumbling." First, a coat of base paint was applied

to the surface. Before it dried completely, other shades and tones of the base coat were brushed into it. Since the finished surface was supposed to be brick, 3" brushes were used with short, horizontal strokes. After this dried, the mortar was painted in using a 1/4" lining brush, and a 1"x3" board to insure a fairly straight and consistent line. A deep grey was used in this case. Now, with the individual bricks outlined, they were given individual identity by dry brushing into them the shade or tone that predominated in them. Dry brushing is the process in which a brush is lightly charged with paint, and then drawn lightly across a surface leaving the pattern of the brush bristles as a texture. This is a useful technique for duplicating the texture of wood grain, and for that reason, all the wood surfaces on the set were dry brushed. The "Old Bailey" was dry brushed with black, and just a trace of deep blue to catch the blue light used in the second act. The furniture, mopboards, and all the wood trim in the set were dry brushed with a shade of their base coat.

The kitchen area and the upstage hallway were both treated with deep shades of red base to reduce their brightness and hence the focus on them. Sponging on these surfaces

was also heavy to deepen their textures.

The floor areas enclosed by the set were painted a deep brick red/brown. The interior was textured to simulate a wood floor, while the exterior portion of the set, near the post, was treated to simulate brick. Two real rugs were laid on the floor, a large oval one in the living room, and a square one in the dining room on which the table and chairs stood. (See Appendix: Plates #1-4)

Only four property items required new construction, the remainder being drawn from stock and either used as they were, or simply painted or reupholstered. The first item built was the fireplace, which was designed to look somewhat collapsed. The basic frame and outline was first cut out of 5/8" plywood, the other parts built, and then all assembled. Then water-soaked 1/8" Upson board was applied over the framework and molded to the desired shape. (See drawing #13) After this had dried, all the cracks were dutchmaned and the unit was ready for paint and trim.

The mirror frame was cut out of 5/8" plywood and then a sheet of aluminum was stapled to the back to simulate the mirror.

The china cupboard that rested on the sideboard was

faced with 5/8" plywood cut to the desired shape, shelved with 1"x6" which was then trimmed with 1/4" plywood. The cornice at the top was made of Celastic which had been shaped and molded with plasticine. (See drawing #14.)

"Gormless", the single Speak-Your-Weight Machine, used in the production, was built using standard flat construction for the body and base, while the head was shaped from 5/8" plywood. In design he was animated through his basic shape, and by using his mechanical fixtures to suggest human features. (See drawing #15) The script required that he be wired for sound and at one point in the play, light up. A speaker was mounted in the body and three Christmas Tree lights were mounted in the head. His mouth and one eye were cut out and covered with colored gelatine with the lights mounted behind the openings. The lines that ran from his body to the power supplies were fitted with male and female quick connectors to prevent a mistaken connection.

The two armchairs drawn from stock for the show only required upholstering to fit the color scheme so no rebuilding was considered necessary. The side board needed some work done to the drawers to make them work easier, and the side cupboard upon which the cash register sat needed

repairs to one of its legs. The plastic skull that in the first act rested on the mantlepiece and on the Judge's bench during the second act would not stay in place, so a 1" dowel rod was fitted into a hole at the base of its skull. Holes were then drilled in the two units to accommodate the dowel. The books that required specific titles on them were painted first with spray paint to cover the original titles, and then the new titles required by the script were lettered on.

Trim properties were selected on the basis of their appropriateness to the location, their color scheme, and what they could reveal about the household. Therefore, parts and pieces of several sets of china were placed in the china cupboard along with incidental pieces of china, eating utensils of various fashions and use, and miscellaneous decorative items. (See Appendix A - Property List) Books were scattered all over the house, stacked on everything that would hold them.

The kitchen trim consisted mainly of property items used on stage, it being used as an on-stage property.

Sound for the show fell generally into four categories: music, voice, offstage sound and live onstage sound. Music

was required by the script to bridge transitions in action, or to function directly within the action of a scene. Voice was associated mostly with the "Speak-Your-Weight Machines," while the offstage sound effects included only the noise made by Kirby in the upstairs rooms. Live "on-stage" sound consisted only of a doorbell, and a telephone ring. The single requirement made by the director was that it should make as humorous a comment upon the action of the play that it was motivated by as much as possible.

The music required by the script itself and the music added to the show by the director during the course of the rehearsals was generally quite familiar and easily available on several recordings. (See Appendix B) The recording of "Rule Britania" that was used to open the two acts and to close the show, while being quite formal, was also rather lively and light in its orchestration. It was chosen for the light but direct comment it made on the action of the play. For the "Hallelujah Chorus" a particularly full-bodied choral and orchestrated recording was selected for the ridiculous comment it made upon the 499 Speak-Your-Weight Machines that were supposedly singing it. This same technique of ridiculous context was later applied in

the second act when the courtroom officials assembled for the first time to the very full and austere strains of "Pomp and Circumstance." This was followed immediately by the "British Grenadier March" which has been re-recorded slightly faster than the original to give an almost frivolous effect for the chorusline dance the officials were lead through by the judge. The Gilbert and Sullivan selections which accompanied the set change between acts were also played slightly faster to match the organized pandemonium that was occuring onstage. A very light and melodic passage from the "William Tell Overture" accompanied a very abrupt sunrise, while a formal and very romantic Strauss Waltz was played for Sylvia and Stanley when the came in from a date at midnight, drunk. The "Lizzy Borden" song for the second act had to be recorded live since a recording of it in three-part harmony in a minor key could not be found.

All of the music found on disc recordings for this show was transferred to tape because of the easy cueing a tape recorder provides. All but one selection of the spoken sound required by this show had to be recorded live. That selection was from a speech delivered by Winston Chur-

chill to the Canadian Parliament in 1943. The director wanted to open the show with the following quotation and comment:

> Hitler has said that he will wring the neck of this nation like the neck of a chicken. Some chicken. Some neck.

After a long search the speech that contained the quotation was found in the Department of Radio and Television record library. The actor who played the Judge made the recording of the Judge's speech in act two that begins with, "Not only were you as drunk..." The voices for the three Speak-Your-Weight Machines were very carefully selected by the director and the recordings made. They consisted of a Basso for Gormless, and a Baritone and a Spprano for the other two. As it turned out, Gormless handled all three voices in the production.

At first it was thought that the noise Kirby made moving the weights about could be produced by dropping weights on the floor above the stage. The quality of the sound that the brick, concrete, and steel building produced did not seem to be appropriate for the play. Also, the steelwork in the building tended to distribute the sound and all sense of direction was lost.

The sound that finally seemed right for the play and the purpose was produced by dropping twenty-five-pound counterweight irons onto a padded platform top. The sharp, hollow thuds this produced were recorded on tape to fit with the way the rest of the sound was done in the show. To suggest that the thuds were coming from upstairs in the set, a speaker was located just outside the upstage door. It was aimed at the ceiling, producing the sense of direction and the quality of reverberation desired.

The two bells for the door and the telephone were wired into switches that were operated inside the control booth. Both bells were placed in the far upstage corner.

The lighting design for the play was intended to set the mood, provide an acceptable level of illumination, and give the necessary dramatic effect. In the first act it was felt that the light should create a very bright and lively interior to match the activity that was taking place. The instruments were all angled and focused to cover as much area as possible. In the Masquer Theater the instruments have to be located so near to the playing areas that in order to insure a smooth wash of light, and to avoid "Hot spots" of highly intense light, the instruments are

normally flooded.[5] Light pink (Brigham #2) and Daylight Blue (Brigham #25) were used for the areas, and Light Straw (Brigham #54) was used for fill and to suggest sunlight. The only areas to be dimmed down at all during the first act were the post area and the kitchen and upstairs hallway during the times when these were not being used. Otherwise, the first act was played as a "lights up comedy." (See drawing #21)

The desired mood for the second act was radically different, as both the director and designer saw it as Mr. Groomkirby's nightmare. These scenes were to be lit with very small areas of richly-colored light that caught only the corners of objects and was angled to deepen the shadows on actors' faces. The four major areas that were selected to be lit were the two boxes, the Judge's upper body, and an area near the post. This was consistent with the blocking and the movement of characters during the trial scene. Secondary areas consisted of the dining room table where the two counsels sat, and the clerk's table which was also used for the whist scene. The instruments for

---

[5]Flooded: A manner of focusing a lighting instrument so it will produce a very wide beam of light.

the areas were hung at high angles whenever possible in order to keep light off the walls and spill on the floor where it would not be seen, and so the actor's faces would be highlighted. The instruments were all focused to as small an area as the actors' movements would allow, and top hats[6] were put on the instruments that had a bad flare problem. The colors used were Light Blue (Brigham #27) for backlighting, and Medium Scarlet (Brigham #65) for front and down lighting. (See drawing #22)

Light cues throughout the act were much more numerous and abrupt than they had been for the first act. Often radical changes were required in lighting conditions within the space of a few minutes. The act begins with the first act lighting conditions. Then when Mr. Groomkirby turns on the control panel, the lights fade immediately to the second act set-up. The courtroom officials gather, and go into the chorus line number for which the bright light comes back up, and then down again as soon as the judge opens the court. At another point in the act, during the whist scene, a very gloomy lighting condition is suddenly changed when all the first act lights are brought up to

[6]top hats: A device placed over the front of a lighting instrument designed to cut off the edges of the light beam.

full on the line, "Dawn! Punctual as ever!"

Although the amount of light provided for the second act was small in quantity, the more experienced actors had little trouble finding the light, keeping in it, and using it. The Prosecuting Counsel was as diabolically efficient with his light as he was with his case.

The purpose of the Technical Rehearsals is to coordinate the technical elements of the play into the total production. This includes setting all the light and sound cues, their duration and intensity, and working out all the property and scene shifts. All of the information pertinent to the eventual operation of the cue must be clearly written down and understood by the operator. The first technical rehearsal is usually spent doing this and therefore can be done without benefit of the actors. In preparation for this series of rehearsals, the technical director has many things to accomplish:

1. He must have recruited the necessary help and if necessary familiarized them with the equipment they are to eventually handle.

2. He should see that all the props are ready to go, or are in preparation, in which case he should have rehearsal props for the actor and crew members to handle.

3. He should have attended several run-throughs of the show so he would know what will be technically necessary for him to prepare.

4. He should have a complete list of all the sound cues and light cues, in the proper order they occur in the play.

5. He should be aware of any changes the director has made to the script, or any particular requirements the director has made.

6. He should be aware of any problems actors may have that would affect what he plans to do.

7. The equipment necessary for the operation of the show should be in repair.

8. He should also be aware of all the special requirements made upon any property or piece of scenery.

The first technical rehearsal was successful on all counts except for the sound. The sound plot from which the tapes were made did not include several cues and some were out of order. It was during this rehearsal that the live sound from upstairs was tried and discarded, so that the thumps had to be recorded and worked into the production at a later time. This mix-up could have been easily avoided if a listening session could have been arranged with the director a day earlier, but the rushed status of this production not only provided an incomplete tape for the first technical rehearsal, but also one that kept coming apart at the splices to add to the confusion. This latter

problem could have been easily avoided if the time had been taken to adhere the splicing tape firmly to the splice with a fingernail. Except for some minor angling and replugging, the lighting for the first act was set. The scene shift between acts could not be rehearsed yet because some of the units were still in the shop being rebuilt. The judge's bench had to be raised six inches and the two boxes cut down by six inches. This was done to improve the sight lines in the second act because the Judge was blocked from some of the audience sight lines by the boxes.

The next rehearsal of the first act was run that night with actors. During the afternoon the sound tapes had been reworked and were almost ready for the show, except for the Churchill quotation which had not been found yet, and thumps which had not been recorded for want of time. Splices continued to break, and the speakers that had been mounted in the bodies of the three "Speak-Your-Weight Machines" were not at all suitable for the purpose they were being used for. They were too small in size and in power capacity for the use to which they were being put. The scene shift with the three machines at the beginning of the play proved to be intolerably slow and clumsy as they

had to be moved offstage next to the post in single file during a blackout. This problem eventually motivated the decision to use only "Gormless" for the production. It was also discovered that the actress who played Myra was on a very strict diet and could not eat all of the food that had been planned for her to eat during the first act. One calorie and a glass of water was her limit! So, some means of suggesting she would eat a great deal had to be worked out between her and the director, and the technical director.

The next day's rehearsal of act two was done without benefit of the complete act two lighting set up for want of a final decision by the technical director, he being hesitant to try to play that act with as little light as was eventually used. Also, resources of time and manpower were used to get the sound into a presentable condition and the "Old Bailey" units ready for the rehearsal. The lights suffered accordingly.

The next rehearsal was to be a complete technical run through of the whole show. Now the director and the technical director saw for the first time what the piecemeal work of the past three weeks had wrought. The progress was

slow because a good many of the sound and light cues were being taken for the first time, and time had to be spent setting cues, duration and intensities. However, the first steps toward solving the eating scenes were taken that night by the masking idea previously discussed The table would be laden with food when Myra first sits down, she would start eating and then the audience's attention would be drawn to the post area by Mr. Groomkirby and Sgt. Barnes. Meanwhile, Myra and Mrs. Groomkirby quietly handed the food back to the kitchen and received dirty dishes back. The area on the kitchen cupboard where the food and dishes were stored was masked sufficiently from most audience viewpoints to do this. The eventual acquisition of the refrigerator all but solved the problem by providing an onstage storage place and further blocking sight lines. Myra could sit there and eat low calorie food with a good deal of gusto while Mrs. Groomkirby moved food and dishes around.

That evening with the "Old Bailey" units once again in working condition, the scene shift could be worked out. The size of the units absolutely dictated that they be moved onto the stage through the post entrance way. This

meant that they also had to go through the inner lobby while the audience was using it. Since the unit would be assembled on stage in full view of those audience members who cared to stay and watch, it was decided to make the scene shift part of the production and begin it before the audience had an opportunity to leave their seats. The four stage hands who were to shift the scenery were costumed to match their different physical builds. A butcher, a football player, a degenerate dandy, and a funny-looking-little-man followed Mr. Groomkirby to the task one behind the other, in step to a frantic rendition of "Hail! Hail! The Gan's All Here..." The "Old Bailey" was stacked in the corner of the inner lobby in a pile to defy identity and to expedite the shift which progressed at the rate of a 1920's movie. They all finished a given task at the same time and without looking back, followed Mr. Groomkirby out the door. The house lights finished coming up, and the intermission began.

After one last lighting instrument was hung for the second act, the kitchen finally completed, the sound tapes ready for the show, and the scene shift worked out, the technical rehearsals were ready to begin--not end.

The dress rehearsal before opening night went remarkably well, considering the chaotic dondition things had been in four days before. The show had to be started twice to accommodate the sound and the scene shift, but this gave the crew one more opportunity to work with the most difficult scene in the show, and to provide a little more insurance against the next evening's performance.

With the technical rehearsals completed and the show on stage for a five-day run, it was then possible to critically examine the results of the entire design and technical direction process. Generally, the production was successful. Although the first act was fairly well received, the second act proved to be the high point of the show. Everywhere throughout the production, though, evidence of a rushed schedule was present. Too often, decisions and ideas had been put to work on stage too quickly in order to accommodate the pressing needs of a tight schedule. The decisions for design in the first act worked well to prepare the audience for the madness that was to follow, and nicely complemented the bright, busy activities of the household. However, the design idea that had been developed in the fireplace failed to be completely integrated into

the whole set. It was there in parts and pieces, but was not fully developed to produce a completely unified design. More successful was the design of the second act set which accomplished the feeling of a harsh courtroom environment that was imposing itself upon the Groomkirby's. The second act lighting also contributed strongly to the success of this design, and accented the mood of a nightmare the director wanted for this act. The floor plan, which solved many problems of location, sight lines, and property and scene shifts, was also prematurely settled. The line of the back wall of the Groomkirby house committed the director to diagonal movement patterns. The use of the post area as a neutral area for the playing of the outdoor scenes worked quite well; however, the use of this same area for the upstairs scenes involving Kirby did not work, and further consideration of other possibilities should have been made by both the director and the designer. The establishment of the audience-to-playing-area relationship through the overhead arches was possible the most effective use made of the theater by the designer.

While lighting was possibly the most successful technical element in the show, especially in setting the mood

for the second act, the sound was all but detrimental in places. Work on this very important element of the show should have begun much sooner than it was. Preplanning and preparation for the between-acts scene shift proved time and resources well spent, while lack of this same planning and preparation hurt the scene shift that was necessary at the very opening of the show. Further, the technical director should never have agreed to the technical rehearsal schedule desired by the director. Although it seemed satisfactory on paper to only rehearse one act per day, it finally cost the total production one very important day of rehearsal.

The success of an undertaking such as this production heavily depends on two things: preplanning and dedication. The relative success or failure of the elements of the production was directly related to the amount of complete planning and foresight given them by the director and the designer. But good or bad, the final success of this production was due in great part to the willing sacrifice of time and energy by the construction and running crews.

APPENDIX A

Property List

Act I

On Stage Set, Trim, and Hand Props

At Post: "Gormless

Living Room:

Arm chair, small

Arm chair, large

On it--miscellaneous books, including:

"Ways with Wood"

"The Complete Cabinet Maker and Joiner"

"Do's and Don't's for Dovetailers"

Magazine rack with newspaper, several magazines

Foot Stool (hassock)

On it--miscellaneous books, including

"Noah's Arc: The Supreme Achievement in Wood"

On Window Ledge--books

Fireplace

On it--miscellaneous books, including:

"Perjury for Pleasure"

"Out and About on Circuit"

"Teach Yourself Torts"

"Cabinet Making"

A human skull

A pay packet holding miscellaneous change and a bill or two

A travel brochure

Inside the fire place: books

Against up/center wall:

Ironing board

Mirror

Small Side Table

On it:

more books

electric iron

Dining Room:

Table covered by table cloth

On it:

cash register with cover

books stacked beside it

In top drawer:

clothes brush

Side serving board

On it:

books

cruet

packs of cereal

miscellaneous bottles

pieces of silverware

salt and pepper shakers

spice bottles

plates, cups, glasses

a tray

napkin

In top drawer:

feather duster

dish towel

China cupboard

In it:

Clock

miscellaneous sets and pieces of china

plates

tea cups

bottles

drinking mug

glasses

decorative china

vases

sugar bowl

Kitchen:

Refrigerator

On it: small vase

In it:

turkey

bowl of potatoes

dish of vegetables

large bowl with small portion of Jello

Cupboard

On it:

Tray

Silver service

napkin

china service: tea bag, tea pot

tray:

left-over portions of food

celery sticks

olives

tea bags

bowl of fruit

plate with bleached turkey bones (several loose) rest glued together

half loaf of bread

mix master

hot plate

silverware, including large spoon

dish towel

tea pot with water in it

tea cup with saucer

Off Stage:

Wheelchair with Mildred's gloves, blanket,umbrella, and lorgnette

Tray

On it:

tea service

toast

jelly

sugar

silver service

Large weight: Kirby

Tool bag: Mr. Groomkirby

In it:

hammer

screw driver

wooden mallet

miscellaneous tools

With it:

roll of blueprints

a panel from the Prosecution box

a panel from the Judge's box, written on it: "Old Bailey"

Also written on Judge's box:
Famous Institutions
Kit No. 12

Basket full of clothing
Packing excelsior

Hand properties:

Kirby: conductor's baton
Mabel: feather duster
Myra: hand bag
Barnes: cigarettes in case
matches
wrist watch

Act II

Preset on stage:

Judge's bench with chair
On it: the skull

Counsel's box
a jacket

Witness's box
Inside it: a World War I helmet

Clerk's table and two chairs
On it:
Ink well
Feather pen
Swearing card
Large Bible

Dining Room table

On it:

Cash register

One place setting:

dishes

Myra's large bowl with Jello

dish of asparagus

Mantelpiece: pay packet

Sideboard: tray with teapot

Off Stage:

Judge:

Mallet

watch

Mr. Groomkirby:

copy of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin

notebook (pocket size)

pencil

Counsel for the Prosecution:

brief case

In it:

calendar

pistol

papers

pencils

Counsel for the defense:

brief case

In it:

Lollypop

papers

Clerk:

large book

trumpet

Usher:

staff

pitch pipe

Stanley:

a gin bottle, partially full

tray:

On it:

bread

jelly

Sylvia: hand purse

Kirby: baton

APPENDIX C

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHS

ACT I DESIGN

ACT I SETTING

ACT II DESIGN

ACT II SETTING

Program

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA and MONTANA MASQUERS

present

ONE WAY PENDULUM

by N. F. SIMPSON

DAVID JASPER HUNT, Director

HARRY TRICKEY, Designer and Technical Director

AUSTIN GRAY, Costumer

Masquer Theater

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 4, 1966 — 8:15 P.M.

CAST

Kirby Groomkirby ..... Horst Fenske

Robert Barnes ..... Mike Rosbarsky

Mabel Groomkirby ..... Sue Helen Hunt

Sylvia Groomkirby ..... Janette Webb

Aunt Mildred ..... Kathleen Schoen

Myra Gantry ..... Beverly Jane Thomas

Arthur Groomkirby ..... Teddy Ulmer

Stanley Honeyblock ..... Chris Roberts

Judge ..... Michael Daley

Policeman ..... Terry Suokko

Usher ..... George Durant

Clerk ..... Linus Carleton

Prosecution ..... Duncan Crump

Defence ..... Paul Anderson

There will be a 15-minute Intermission following Act I.

CREW

Assistant to the Director ..... Doug Dunnell

Technical Assistants ..... Signe Anderson, Larry Brumback, Linus Carleton, Glenn Gauer, R. Patrick Mallory, Barry Ormsbee

Stage Manager ..... Larry Brumback

Lights ..... Barry Ormsbee, Patricia Maxson

Sound ..... R. Patrick Mallory, Michele MacMillan

Properties ..... Larry Brumback

Technical Crew ..... JoHanna Bangeman, Ron Hallock, David Hansen, David Herbert, Rosalie Bianchi, Frances Morrow, Leon Pinski, Nikki Orr, Mary Shawl, Grant Thrailkill, Ken Wolsey, Richard Nicaise, Sally Straine

Secretary ..... Janette Webb

Publicity ..... Austin Gray, Patricia Maxson

Box Office ..... Dorothy Diede

For their assistance in preparing the production, we wish to thank:
Dr. Joseph Mussulman, the University Choir, Miss Judith Lynn Stowe, Mr J. P. Hess

NOTES

When a woman described by the prosecution as a "devoted and loving wife" was charged at Cardiff yesterday with murdering her husband, the defence successfully submitted there was no case to answer.

Mrs. Florence May Buck, aged 49, of Taff Terrace, Grangetown, Cardiff, was discharged.

The prosecution alleged that when Mrs. Buck was carving meat, her husband, Hedley James Buck, aged 42, a channel pilot, helped himself to vegetables and she objected and stabbed him.

In an alleged statement, Mrs. Buck said: "He kept taking the cabbage and I told him to stop or else I would do him. He took the veg again and I told him there would be none left for the daughter-in-law, so I stuck the carving knife in him, but I was only playing."

She had added: "I did not stab my husband intentionally. I worshipped every hair of his head."

The Magistrate said that it would be a waste of time and public money to send the case any further. (from **The London Times)**

Mr. Hunt is directing "ONE WAY PENDULUM" in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts Degree.

ARTICLES AND PERIODICALS AS SOURCE MATERIAL

Alvarez, A. The New Statesman, LIX (January 2, 1960), p. 12.

Brien, Alan. The Spectator. CCIV (January 1, 1960) p. 13.

Chapman, John. Daily News. September 19, 1961.

Gassner, John. Educational Theatre Journal. XXXVI (December, 1961), p. 291.

Gilman, Richard. Commonwealth. LXXV (October 20, 1961) p. 94.

Hewes, Henry. Saturday Review. XLIV (October 7, 1961) p. 38

Oliver, Edith. The New Yorker Magazine. XXXVII (September 30, 1961), pp. 118-20.

Panter-Downes, Mollie. The New Yorker Magazine, XXXVI, (May 28, 1960), p. 104.

Simon, John. Hudson Review. XIV (Winter, 1961), p. 589-90.

Theatre Arts, XLV (November, 1961), p. 58-9.

Theophilus, Lewis. America. CVI (October 7, 1961), p. 29

Trewin, J. C. Illustrated London News. CCXXXVI, (January 16, 1960), p. 110.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS AS REFERENCE MATERIAL

Adix, Vern, Theatre Scenecraft. Anchorage, Kentucky: Children's Theatre Press, 1956.

Bowman, Walter Parker, and Robert Hamilton Ball. Theatre Language. New York, New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1961.

Burris-Meyer, Harold, and Vincent Mallory. Sound in the Theatre. Mineola, New York: Radio Magazines, Inc. 1959.

Fry, Roger, and others. Burlington Magazine Monograph III: Georgian Art (1760-1820). New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.

Gassner, John, and Philip Barber. Producing the Play and New Scene Technician's Handbook (rev. ed.). New York, New York: The Dryden Press, Publishers, 1958.

Gassner, John, and Ralph G. Allen. Theatre and Drama in the Making. Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964.

Gillette, Arnold. Stage Scenery: Its Construction and Rigging. New York, New York: Harper and Rowe, Publishers, Inc., 1959.

Gorelik, Mordecai. New Theatres for Old. New York, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1962.

Granville, Wilfred. The Theater Dictionary: British and American Terms in the Drama, Opera, and Ballet. New York, New York: Philosophical Library, 1952.

Hainaux, Rene. Stage Design Throughout the World Since 1935. New York, New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1956.

Hainaux, Rene. Stage Design Throughout the World Since 1950. New York, New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1964.

Hunter, George Leland. Decorative Textiles. Philadelphia, Pa.: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1918.

Jennings, Arthur Seymour. Wall Papers and Wall Coverings. New York, New York: William T. Comstock Company, 1903.

Jones, Robert Edmund. The Dramatic Imagination. New York, New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941.

Lerallois, Pierre. Decoration. New York, New York: French and European Publishing, Inc., 1962.

Melchiner, Siegfried. The Concise Encyclopedia of Modern Drama. New York, New York: Horizon Press, 1964.

Montgomery, Elizabeth, and others. Designing and Making Stage Costumes by Motley. New York, New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1964.

McCandless, Stanley A. A Method of Lighting the Stage. New York, New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1947.

McCurdy, Charles. Modern Art. New York, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1964.

Obset, Francis. Art and Design in Home Living. New York, New York: The MacMillan Co., 1963.

Pendleton, Ralph. The Theatre of Robert Edmond Jones. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1958.

Philippi, Herbert. Stagecraft and Scene Design. Boston, Mass.: Houghton, Miffin Company, 1953.

Praz, Mario. An Illustrated History of Furnishings. New York, New York: George Braziller, 1964.

Pritchard, Phillip L. Furniture Forum. New York, New York: Phillip L. Pirtchard, 1951.

Seeley, Vernite. Harmony in Interiors. New York, New York: Whittlesey House-McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1940

Simonson, Lee. The Art of Scenic Design. New York, New York: Harper and Rowe, Publishers., Inc., 1950.

Simonson, Lee. The Stage is Set. New York, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1932.

Simpson, N. F. One Way Pendulum. New York, New York: Samuel French, Inc., 1960.

Simpson, N. F. The Hole. London: Samuel French, 1958.

Simpson, N. F. A Resounding Tinkle. London: Samuel French 1958.

Simpson, N. F. The Crest Run. London: Faber & Faber, 1966.

Sobel, Bernard. Theatre Hand Book. New York, New York: Crown Publishing Company, 1940.

Spar, Francis. Le Style Anglais: 1750-1850. New York, New York: Et Societe D Etudes Et De Publicions Economiques, 1959.